

Fr. Condon play presented in Ione, comes to Heppner



Madelyn Nichols plays the part of St. Therese.

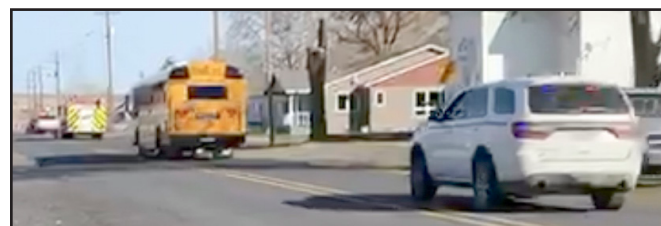


Irelyn Kollman, Brian Kollman, Madelyn Nichols, Joe Lindsay (as the Pope) and Dan Van Schoiack performed in the play in Ione last week.

“The Little Way of St. Therese,” written by Father Gerald Condon, was presented March 8 at the Ione Community School. It will be presented again March 12 at 7 p.m. at St. Patrick’s Parish Hall in Heppner. Admission is free, donations accepted.

Father Condon has been writing and producing plays for over 25 years. Many of the cast members participating in this year’s production were in his original productions.

Ione/Arlington team takes 4th in state



Basketball team is escorted out of town.

The Ione/Arlington basketball team received an escort out of Ione on their way to the 1A State Basketball Tournament in

Baker City last week. The team took fourth place in the tournament.

Ione boys have not



gone to the state tournament since 2014 and Arlington had not participated since 2004.

The Ione/Arlington basketball team took fourth place in the state tournament held in Baker City.

County Health says most with Coronavirus have ‘mild symptoms’ without medical care

By David Sykes

Most people with Coronavirus will experience mild symptoms and do not need to seek medical care, the Morrow County Health Department said last week.

Giving a report to county commissioners on the virus, health officials Shelley Wight and Sheree Smith said health officials are being inundated with phone calls from concerned community members regarding possible exposure to the Coronavirus and said it is important to minimize the panic over the disease.

They asked employers in the county to encourage their employees who are well to continue to work and if they are well instead of going to the health clinics to call 211 with questions. They said this will minimize unnecessary burden on healthcare providers. They said if the Morrow County Health Department receives information about exposure in their area, they will call the employer and work directly with them to “assess your risk.”

If, however, an employee is experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, cough, difficulty breathing) encourage the employee to stay home and that the employer “be flexible in accommodating those reporting illnesses.”

They ask that those employees “who are sick and plan to seek medical care to please call before going in for care so arrangements can be made to prevent exposing others to the virus.” For urgent medical needs however, they say do call 911.

Smith and Wight did urge people to take precautions to not spread the virus.

1. Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash.

2. Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

3. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

4. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

5. Clean and disinfect surfaces that are often touched.

6. If you are sick, please stay home until recovered.

7. Take care of your health overall. Staying current on your vaccinations, including flu vaccine, eating well and exercising all help your body stay resilient.

They recommend people refer to the Morrow County web site, www.co.morrow.or.us or Facebook page for up to date information.

Father Condon made Heppner his home



Father Condon (left) pictured with the cast of his 2017 play. File photo.

By Doris Brosnan

One event in Heppner’s good fortune of 1990 traces back to Ireland, where Dubliner Gerald Condon was ordained a priest in Thurles in 1955. Soon after arriving in the USA, Father “Gerry” was welcomed by the Baker Diocese, first as a visiting priest who filled in for priests who had to be away from their parishes for varying lengths of time. After forty-five years in several northeastern Oregon communities, he chose to come to Heppner permanently. How appropriate that he would choose the self-proclaimed “Irish Capital of Eastern Oregon.” This decision began his long, positive relationship with generations of Catholic parishioners and non-Catholic area residents, young and old. The following list speaks volumes on Father Condon’s impact on his parish and on the community beyond church doors:

During his twenty-three years of serving Heppner’s St. Patrick and Ione’s St. William parishes, Father performed 44 marriages, 135 baptisms, 75 first communions, and 70 funerals. He initiated an adult-study program, was a facilitator for church Renewal Weekend retreats and shared his insights with the readers of the Gazette Times each year at Christmas and Easter. He helped get the annual parish carnival started, a public-welcome event for young and old. He was a hypnotherapist who used this training and his training in counseling for anyone in need. He wrote and published a free pamphlet, Way of Grace, in 1997 – scriptures, meditations, and home celebrations for



Priests celebrate Father Condon (center with plaque).

contemplation of the seven sacraments.

After staging another playwright’s religious drama in 1994, Father Condon began writing his own plays. He and his cast of actors staged St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland in 2002, and he wrote and collaborated on a total of sixteen religious productions that have served as preludes to the St. Patrick’s Day celebrations in Heppner. The productions were always free to everyone and always well attended. Father even took to a stage, when he filled a role in the 2010 “Dinner at the Cemetery” production, The Palace Hotel.

In 1997, Father was the honoree at the St. Patrick’s weekend celebration and again led the Big Green Parade with his cast members in 2010. He was a mainstay at the weekend’s Coffee Hour each year, serving as entertaining emcee, sharing many jokes and laughs with fellow emcees.

Father Condon received the “Man of the Year” award in 2007, proof of his involvement in and support of community activities. And the Heppner Chamber of Commerce recognized him for his service in 2013. That was the year in which Father retired from his assignment, and the priests of the Northeast-

ern Deanery of the Baker Diocese also honored him for his service.

Retirement did not mean much to this engaged gentleman, however. He continued to assist the priests who followed in his footsteps, co-celebrating the mass until recently. But retirement offered him more time for pursuing his quiet contemplation, his writing, and his golfing. Though he once told someone, “I don’t particularly like the game, but I am supposed to golf for my health.” His play almost every Monday through Friday, even in temperatures as low as 32 degrees, seemed a contradiction. He was a participant each year in the Holy Names men’s tournament, on the winning team at least twice, and he was on the course for his common eleven holes on the day before his most recent surgery. When complimented on a shot, he often replied, “Often done worse.... Seldom done better.”

A great Irishman for jokes, Father Condon remained a serious servant who felt challenged to “open the Gospel in a way that appeals to people... seems to be getting more challenging as time passes.” *Father Condon passed away March 7. See death notice on page 3.*



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Sunday, March 15, 2020
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Heavy hors d'oeuvres & No Host Bar

For more information please contact: Erin Hansell-Heideman
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www.cliffbentz.com

Cliff Bentz: Husband, businessman, and third generation Eastern Oregon rancher, Cliff Bentz is fighting to protect our conservative Oregon values. As an Eastern Oregon legislator, he stood up for rural Oregon, individual Second Amendment rights, lower taxes, and land and water rights. In Congress, Cliff Bentz will support President Trump, continue defending rural Oregon, and work to stop the liberal agenda.

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ROGER & RITA BRITT

Saturday, March 28, 2020
1:00pm - Lunch will be served
The Gilliam and Bisbee Building
106 E. May Street - Heppner, Oregon
Hosted by Russell & Jason
RSVP by March 15th to russelltwalt@yahoo.com or (307) 554-6157



No Gifts Please